

## RELATED TERMS

- Full Scale Exercise
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- Mass Casualty Incident



## Lessons Learned Information Sharing

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# LESSON LEARNED

## PRIMARY DISCIPLINES

- Volunteer and Donations Management
- Emergency Management

## Exercise Conduct: Developing Procedures to Identify and Remove Problematic Volunteers

### SUMMARY

Exercise planners should consider developing procedures to identify and remove potentially problematic volunteer actors before the start of full-scale exercises (FSE). This can reduce the likelihood that volunteer actors' behavior will disrupt the exercise.

### DESCRIPTION

On June 7, 2005, Volusia County, Florida, hosted an FSE simulating a man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS) attack on a commercial airliner departing from Daytona Beach International Airport. The FSE was designed to improve cooperation among agencies likely to participate in a Volusia County ocean mass casualty incident (MCI). The FSE focused on the triage and treatment of victims on or near a quarter-mile portion of Daytona Beach. Nearly 140 volunteers took part in the exercise, with 90 actors playing MCI victims.

A small number of volunteers exhibited negative behaviors, such as impatience and excessive complaining, prior to the start of the FSE. Several of these individuals later disrupted the exercise by building sandcastles, wildly running and screaming, and openly conversing with one another despite their "critical condition" as victims. The inappropriate behavior diminished the FSE's effectiveness by reducing its overall level of realism. As a result, Volusia County Emergency Management (VCEM) created a procedure to identify and remove problematic volunteers from future exercises. The VCEM now sends an exercise controller to observe the behavior of volunteers at staging areas prior to the start of FSEs. The controller identifies and removes individuals who exhibit negative behaviors before they can disrupt the exercise. On April 28, 2006, VCEM conducted an FSE free of volunteer disruptions.

Exercise planners should develop procedures to identify and remove potentially problematic volunteers before the start of FSEs. This can reduce the likelihood that volunteer behavior will disrupt an exercise.

### CITATION

Mauney, James. Deputy Fire Chief, Volusia County Emergency Management. Interview with *Lessons Learned Information Sharing*, 24 Aug 2006.

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